

REMARKS

Applicant has canceled claim 20, amended claims 16, 22 and 24, and added new claim 25. Accordingly, only claims 16-19 and 21-25 remain in the application. Of the remaining claims, new claim 25 represents now-canceled claim 20 in independent form which was stated to be allowable. The other claims were all rejected on Dutta, et al. 3,800,547.

Applicant has amended all independent claims 16, 22 and 24 to describe the rigid support having a height less than the sea height, so the upper portion of the support lies in the sea. In Dutta, his tower 3 (his Fig. 1) extends above the sea. Accordingly, applicant believes that the remaining claims are not anticipated by Dutta.

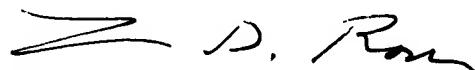
Earlier in the prosecution of this application and of its parent application, the Examiner cited the following two patents, which do not cover the remaining claims:

Panicker 4,182,584 shows a very thin rigid riser section 12 (his Fig. 1) that requires a buoy 15 at the top to keep it stable. Claims 16, 22 and 24 describes the rigid riser support being sufficiently rigid to support itself without a buoy at the top.

Shotbolt 4,793,737 shows, in his Fig. 5, a rigid riser support 35. However, the only lower portions of his flexible pipes 10 that are fixed to his support (at cradles 23) are the parts that actually lie in his cradles. Claims 16, 22 and 24 all describe a supported pipe that is fixed to the riser support at a plurality of locations that are spaced apart by a plurality of meters (cl. 16 and 24), or describe a conduit rigid lower portion fixed to the framed (cl. 22).

In view of the above, favorable reconsideration of the application is courteously requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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